

May 2011 Overview

Stanislaus Backcountry Trail Crew

Cesar Ramirez: Supervisor

Chapter 1: OVERVIEW:

We arrived in Groveland to meet our sponsors John Goodwin and Stephen Dolan. After introductions and hand shaking we began our training. First in order was gathering wood. Eager bodies piled out of the van to load wood into John's truck and rush it back to camp where we met our cook Frank Gado. Camp set up went rather smooth. All bodies moving around soaking all this new information in like sponges, digging sumps, fixing fire pits, washing the dust and dirt off all the dishes, KP tent being raised, and new knots to learn. Everything was taken with a willingness that only the Backcountry could bring together. We spent our weeks in Groveland learning about brushing specs and digging swales. We managed to brush "The Golden Children's Trail", "Indian Creek Trail" and also the legendary "Hamby Trail" with its steep switchbacks that only were put there to test one's ability and patience. Work was also done on the "Merced River Trail" and the "Jenkins Trail". Those few weeks were a good introduction to what would be expected out of us and our push for more to come.

We had our first camp move also, moving from Groveland to Pinecrest. After packing all our stuff in the back of trucks and making last minute calls on where all of stuff would end up, Mother Nature allowed us a brief window to travel without any rain. She quickly made herself known again as it was snowing when we arrived in Pinecrest to set up camp. The crew pushed through and bravely took on the challenge with extra layers of warmth and rain gear determined to continue until home was done....

CURRICULUM: May was jam-packed with a bunch of different classes. A Community discussion class was led by Amanda Seibel, Christina LeMasters, Kionnie Jones and Heather Miller. We had our Mission Statement class, a very good class on people sharing a little about themselves that showed the crew's true compassion for life's challenges. I believe one of the best classes to be had this month was a bowling and Life Appreciation (B-day) Celebration for sponsor Steve Dolan and David O'Neill with piñata, known or unknown Dolan facts and cake. Piñatas are a tricky thing when blindfolded!!!!

PERSONNEL CHANGES: Tim Braynen left us this month. We wish him luck in his endeavors.

ODDS AND ENDS: Thanks to Tessa and Karlson for the visit.

MISSION STATEMENT:

We, the Stanislaus crew of 2011 have come together from different places and backgrounds. We will band together to build our community through dedication, hard work, and integrity – as a crew, and as individuals.

We will venture and conquer the wilds of the forest to find and strengthen ourselves mentally, physically, and spiritually. With blood, sweat, and tears; with laughter and love, we will restore and protect these beautiful trails for all to enjoy. We are one crew, one pulse, and one heart. The fire that burns in our heart motivates us through our darkest hours and forges us into stronger and more determined individuals. We will pick each other up when we are down and grow through each other's experience.

We will leave this forest knowing we have completed our mission and take with us this once in a lifetime experience.

B'lie-dat!